

right? You didn't have to be as bright as a tree full of owls to know we had to change the economy—[laughter]—and the social direction of the country. You didn't. But you've got—listen, this is serious. You have to do that.

The second thing you've got to do is to convince the American people that there are big, meaningful differences between the two candidates for President and Vice President and our Senate and our House candidates. And that will be harder because, as you saw from their convention, we're the only side that wants the American people to know what the differences are. Because if the other side—you know, they know if the American people figure out what the real differences are, we win. Right?

You don't have any doubt of that do you?

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. Do you have any doubt at all?

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. If people know what Al Gore stands for and will do as President as compared with what his opponent will, the difference in Joe Lieberman's voting record in the Senate and Dick Cheney's voting record in the House, if people know the difference in what's in our vision for the future and what we're going to build on and what they intend to dismantle, do you have any doubt what the decision will be? Of course you don't.

Therefore, you should be of good cheer because we can turn around these polls. But it's not the work of a day. It's going to take every day between now and November, and you're going to have to go to every friend you have. And most of the people you know are not as political as your are. Isn't that right? Even the Democrats—they're not as political as you are. And you've got to go out of this convention committed to telling people, "This is a big election. There are big differences. In spite of all the good that's been done in the last 8 years, you haven't seen anything yet. You give Al Gore and Joe Lieberman 8 years and you will see that the best is yet to be." That's what we want you do to for us.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:50 a.m. at the Casa Del Mar. In his remarks, he referred to Edward G. Rendell, general chair, Mayor Dennis W. Archer, general cochair, Representative Loretta Sanchez, vice chair, and Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, Democratic National Committee; Democratic Vice Presidential candidate Senator Joseph I. Lieberman; and Republican Vice Presidential candidate Richard B. Cheney.

Remarks at a Jewish Community Celebration in Los Angeles

August 13, 2000

Thank you very much. Let me begin by thanking Tim and Joel Tauber and Todd Morgan and Bill Dockser and all the leaders of the organizations that brought you all here together. Thank you for giving Hillary such a good reception, I am grateful for that.

I want to say, more than anything else, how profoundly grateful I am for the support I have received from the American Jewish community since 1991, when I first began running for President.

When Hillary and I were discussing whether I should make this race, way back in '91, well over 8 years ago now, one of the things that I hoped I could do was to bring whatever powers of persuasion and understanding of history, as well as human psychology, that I've acquired over the years, to the process of peace in the world.

It seemed to me that the end of the cold war had imposed upon the United States a very special responsibility to reach out and build bridges to countries and regions that we had too often overlooked or seen through a limited lens during the period of the cold war and to try to be a special force for peace, from the Northern Ireland problem to the Balkans to Haiti and our own region, but especially in the Middle East.

And for nearly 8 years now, we have worked to be faithful to the commitment I made to the American people when I began, that we would make the United States the world's leader for peace and freedom, for human rights and security wherever we possibly could. This has been the most rewarding thing, I think, in many ways I've been able to do as President. But it's a work that is—and by the very nature of the way we

human beings are—it's a work that will always be, to some extent, in progress.

Hillary has done a lot, especially with her Vital Voices program in Northern Ireland, going to Israel and working with Mrs. Barak on the violence issue, and, before that, working with others who were in the Israeli Government.

I think I should tell you that the last person I talked to before my plane landed in Los Angeles was Leah Rabin. She's back here in the United States seeing her doctor. She said she got a reasonably good report. And I told her I was going to see you, and she asked me to say hello, so I'm doing it. And I want to get my brownie points with her for doing it.

Tim already mentioned the nomination of Joe Lieberman, but I want to say just a few words about it. I was at a dinner last night that a few of you attended, which honored the last 8 years of our administration. And one of the people who performed was the comedian Red Buttons, who must be—I don't know how old he is now, but he's not a kid. [*Laughter*] And he can say things the rest of us can't say. And the first thing, he got up and said, "Do you know that in Los Angeles the Democrats are changing their theme songs from 'Happy Days Are Here Again' to 'Hava Nagila?'" [*Laughter*] He also gave me a lot of other jokes, but I don't think I should use any of them. [*Laughter*]

Hillary and I have known Joe Lieberman—she may have said this—but we met him in 1970, when I was a first year law student, she was a second year law student, and he was a 28-year-old candidate for the State Senate. And I was especially impressed by the fact that he had been a Freedom Rider in Mississippi, or somewhere in the South, and was down there registering voters at a time when it wasn't easy to do and, frankly, anybody who tried to do it was in some measure of physical danger.

In all the years since, we've kept in touch. And about 15 years ago we were among those who started the Democratic Leadership Council. He's a brilliant man, a little bit of an iconoclast and always willing to think new thoughts, and I think we need more of that in politics. The world is changing very rapidly, and we need people who can think.

And most important of all, he will be a living embodiment—along with Hadassah, who, as all of you know, is the child of Holocaust survivors—they will be a living embodiment of America's continuing commitment to build one national community, to embrace people across all the lines that divide us. It's still the most important thing we can do.

I want to say just a few words, if I might, about the peace process in the Middle East. You'll hear enough of the election rhetoric elsewhere, and maybe a little from me tomorrow night. But I want to talk about that for a moment.

In the last 7 years we've seen the signing of the Declaration of Principles on the South Lawn, which reflected the direct engagement of the parties at Oslo; the Israeli-Palestinian interim agreement, a treaty leading to genuine peace between Israel and Jordan; the rallying of the world's leaders, including the leaders of the Arab world at Sharm al-Sheikh, to condemn terrorist attacks against Israel; the Hebron and Wye accords, which put the implementation of the interim agreement back on track.

In these years, both sides have recognized that whether they like it sometimes or don't like it sometimes, the Israelis and Palestinians are bound to live side by side. Throughout the process, however, the ultimate question of how they would live side by side has been continually deferred. I always thought that was part of the genius of the Oslo accord. Some people didn't like it; I thought it was a smart thing to do. Everyone knew how hard these final status issues were, and everyone knew there was absolutely no chance of resolving them unless the people, particularly those in responsible positions, lived together and worked together over a period of years and gradually began to implement other parts of the agreement so they could get a feel for each other.

However, they agreed that they would resolve all this by September, and we were coming up on the deadline. And they had never really had a formal, face-to-face set of official conversations about these final status issues. And I can understand why. It's kind of like going to the dentist without anybody to deaden your gums. [*Laughter*] I mean, if

this were easy, somebody would have done it years ago.

But that is the context in which I brought them together at Camp David, not because I thought that there was a guarantee of success—far from it—but because they needed a setting in which they could speak openly, think freely, protected from the competing pressures and constant scrutiny that is a part of political life in Israel and throughout the Middle East, perhaps even more than it is in the United States.

Now, I don't want to sugar-coat it. I wanted an agreement. We didn't get one. But I can tell you, significant progress was made at Camp David. One of the Palestinian negotiators said that these were truly revolutionary talks because on their side they entertained publicly—or, not publicly but in front of others—positions they had never before considered. It's almost as if we cracked open a sealed container and took out a set of problems that had been festering in a dark place for 52 years. They're now out on the table; the parties are talking about them—issues never before confronted in an official setting. How would a new Palestinian State be defined? What would its borders be? What should be done about refugees from 1948, not just Palestinian refugees but Jewish refugees, as well. And you might be interested in knowing that the Palestinians felt that their families should be entitled to compensation as well. How do you protect Israel's security if it withdraws from the West Bank? What in the world do you do about Jerusalem? It is a holy city, but it has caused a hellish lot of problems. And we have to think it through in a very serious and sober way.

The process is not over, and therefore, it is inappropriate for me to discuss the specifics. I don't want to make a hard problem more difficult. But I can say one or two things.

First of all, everybody affected by the peace process is faced with a choice. We are now at a crossroads because of the calendar to which the parties themselves have agreed: Down one path lies more confrontation and conflict, more bloodshed and tears; down the other is an agreement, however difficult. By definition, agreements require compromise, which means no one gets 100 percent and

neither side can be in a position to say that it has completely vanquished the other.

That means that, given the positions taken—and I talked about this at the end of the Camp David process—this is an excruciatingly difficult negotiation. The choices are painful and agonizing, but they have to be made. Otherwise, we will repeat the pattern of the past, and then, sometime in the future, another group of leaders will come back to the same set of choices with the same history after more bloodshed and tears, more grievances to redress, more bitterness to overcome.

We may or may not be able to get an agreement, but we ought to keep trying, and I will keep trying every single day.

I want to emphasize some things I have said for 7½ years now, and I haven't changed my mind. We can come up with ideas. We can offer alternatives, but we must not, indeed, we will not attempt to impose any of our ideas. These choices must be freely made by people who must live with them.

In the meanwhile, we must continue to stand by Israel, as we have during my entire tenure as President and for the last 52 years. We will help Israel to maintain its strength. We will minimize the courageous risks the Prime Minister is taking for peace. We will improve our security relationship. We will do everything we possibly can to make this work.

One of the things I think you should know that struck me most at Camp David, and says something for the people who launched the Oslo process 7 years ago, is the difference in the way the negotiators relate to each other even when they were fighting. When I brought the parties together at Dayton after we and our NATO Allies ended the Bosnian war, they could barely stand to be in the same room together. When I went to Kosovo to see our soldiers and to meet with all the parties there, the wounds of ethnic cleansing and the battle we waged to reverse it were so fresh and raw that people could hardly bear to come into the same room and came only because I invited them and insisted that they come.

When I went first to Northern Ireland and walked down the Shankel and the Falls, the Catholic and the Protestant streets in Belfast, it was difficult for the most controversial of

the political leaders who had to be involved in any resolution to even be seen talking to each other, much less for anyone to know they had shaken hands.

The Israelis and Palestinians, after these years, know each other by their first names. They know their spouses' names. They know how many children they have. They know how many grandchildren they have. They tell jokes to each other, sometimes about their own leaders. They laugh, and they talk, and they have a feel for the humanity and the difficulty of the situation.

This is not to say that they are soft-headed. Indeed, I never saw anyone more resolute about the fundamental security interests of the State of Israel than the Prime Minister was in these negotiations. And for whatever it's worth, the security questions were the ones on which we made the most progress, which is something that should be encouraging to all of you.

I don't know what's going to happen. But I know this. The most heartbreaking moments of the last 8 years for me and for Hillary, for Al, and for our whole team, have been those moments when people were blinded by acts of hatred against others because they fit in some sort of category or another—that poor twisted boy that blew up the Federal building in Oklahoma City, his mind and soul polluted by this anti-government venom that was out there at the time; the school children who were killed by terrorist attack in Israel; the man who belonged to a church that he said didn't believe in God but did believe in white supremacy, murdering an African-American basketball coach in Chicago and killing a Korean Christian as he walked out of his church; people who shot the—the man who shot the Jewish children here going to their school and then killed a Filipino postal worker and thought he had had a double success—he killed an Asian and a Federal employee.

We see it within our country and beyond our borders. I have seen people who were literally ethnically indistinguishable in the Balkans killing each other because history made them Orthodox Christians or Muslims or Catholics.

It is ironic that at a time when we celebrate the triumph of the human genome and

where the Internet is the fastest growing communications vehicle in human history—and, by the way, Al Gore did sponsor the legislation. [Laughter] Part of my job since I'm not running, you know, is to correct the record here. [Laughter] The Internet was, in the beginning, the private province of a few physicists. Al Gore saw—virtually before anybody else, certainly in Congress—that it could be transformed into a medium of communication and could hold information that could benefit all of human kind, that the whole Library of Congress would one day be on the Internet. That was the metaphor he said well over a decade ago.

Now the whole Encyclopedia Britannica is on the Internet. Pretty soon, my whole Presidential library will be on the Internet. There were only 50 sites on the World Wide Web when I became President—5-0. Today there are—I'm not sure how many—but way, way over 10 million, the fastest growing mechanism in human history.

But anyway, so you've got all this stuff happening, all this wonderful, modern stuff, and here we are bedeviled by the oldest problems of human society—the fear of the other, people that are different from us.

That's why it's a good thing that Al Gore put Joe Lieberman on the ticket, and other Americans will see that he is a brilliant person, that he is a good person, that he has a contribution to make. And I think more and more people will respect the fact that he gives up his entire Sabbath away from all work and politics on a day that coincidentally happens to be the best politicking day in the American political system. I think this will be a good thing for America.

And what I would ask you to do as we see the events of the coming weeks unfold, is to never lose your passion for peace and for reconciliation, to remember that America cannot do good works abroad unless we are a good country first here at home, that we have to purge ourselves of all traces of bigotry and hatred, and that we have to go forward together as one community, and that we have to do it not just with our words and our pictures but with our deeds.

It is one thing to say we want to build one America and another thing to do it, whether

it's passing hate crimes legislation, employment nondiscrimination legislation, raising the minimum wage, or doing the other kinds of things that show that we really believe that we're all in this together, and we all do better when we help each other.

The overwhelming fact of modern life is not the growth of the Internet, the growth of the global economy, the explosion of biotechnology, but what they all mean in a larger sense, which is that every single day, in breathtaking ways, many of which we cannot see, we are growing more interdependent. We need each other more. So we have to find a way not just to tolerate one another but to celebrate our diversity and take comfort from the fact that what we have in common is even more fundamental and more important. Yes, compassion is important, but enlightened self-interest is even better. We need to know we actually need each other, and we need to do the right thing by each other.

So for me it's a great comfort to know that the Vice President and Joe Lieberman are running, that Hillary is running, and that we're moving in the right direction. I just want to ask you this. Spend every day you can between now and November reminding people that it matters and that there are differences. And if you do that, we'll all win, and America will be fine.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:20 p.m. at the Sony Picture Studios. In his remarks, he referred to Tim Wuliger, president, American Israel Public Affairs Committee; Joel D. Tauber, chairman, executive committee, United Jewish Communities; Todd Morgan, chairman, Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles; William B. Dockser, national chairman, National Jewish Democratic Council; Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel, and his wife, Nava; Leah Rabin, widow of former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of Israel; and Democratic Vice Presidential candidate Senator Joseph I. Lieberman and his wife, Hadassah.

Remarks at a National Democratic Institute Luncheon in Los Angeles

August 14, 2000

Thank you very much. Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, you have just heard a stirring

example of Clinton's first law of politics: Whenever possible, be introduced by someone you have appointed to high office. [Laughter]

Secretary Albright, thank you for your great work as Secretary of State and, before that, as our Ambassador to the United Nations and for your constant friendship and support to Hillary and me.

Gary, thank you for hosting this today and for what you said and for all the good work you do. Mr. Mayor, thank you for putting on a great convention and sitting through all these speeches by Democrats. [Laughter] There's been a lot of talk in this convention about religion because Joe Lieberman is our first Jewish candidate on the national ticket. But I want you to know I am still a confirmed Baptist. We believe in deathbed conversions, and I'd like to have you switch at any time—[laughter]—we love you very much. You too—[inaudible]. [Laughter]

I want to thank Paul Kirk, my friend of many years, and Ken Wollack and all the members of the NDI. Thank you, Senator Feinstein. And I'd like to thank all the members of the diplomatic community who are here, parliamentarians from around the world, and the people who have been or are now part of our diplomatic efforts: Vice President Mondale, who did such a brilliant job in Japan; and Reverend Jackson, our Special Envoy to Africa; Ambassador Blinken; Ambassador Shearer; there are a lot of others here. But I thank them all for what they have done.

I'd also like to say how much I appreciate the work of the NDI, how much I've tried to support it, how grateful I am that we have a nominee for President and Vice President in our party who will strongly support you for a long time in the future.

Way back in the distant past of the last millennium, when I was first elected President, people were asking whether the end of the cold war would lead to a new birth of freedom or whether incipient democracies would be overcome by forces of hardship and hate. There were then perhaps as many reasons for fear as for hope.

In Russia, people faced breadlines and hyperinflation. Many were resigned to an inevitable backlash that would lead back to